

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 SAM-01 SAB-01 EB-07 ACDA-05 AID-05

MC-02 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 /092 W  
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R 281230Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7012

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USCINCEUR

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANA 3634

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, YE, SA

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT AL-HAMDI ON SAUDI/YEMENI RELATIONS

BEGIN SUMMARY: PRESIDENT HAMDI ON DEC 28 EXPRESSED COMPLETE SATISFACTION WITH RESULTS HIS RECENT VISIT TO JIDDA AND ALSO APPRECIATION FOR AMERICAN EFFORTS IN THIS REGARD. FOLLOWING THIS MEETING AND EARLIER MEETING WITH ASNAJ STILL NOT CLEAR WHAT SAUDIS ARE OFFERING HAMDI OR WHAT SAUDIS POSITION IS RE RECENT SOVIET ARMS PROPOSALS. RECOMMEND EMBASSY JIDDA TRY TO OBTAIN FURTHER INFORMATION AND WE WILL DO LIKEWISE. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING DEC 28 CONVERSATION PRESIDENT HAMDI MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS ABOUT THE RESULTS OF HIS RECENT VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA AND THEIR EFFECTS ON SAUDI/YEMENI RELATIONS:

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A. SAUDI LEADERS, INCLUDING KING KHALID, PRINCES

FAHD AND SULTAN ALL EXPRESSED FULL SUPPORT FOR THE YEMENI GOVERNMENT.

B. A SPECIAL EMISSARY FROM PRINCE SULTAN WILL BE ARRIVING IN SANA IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS BRINGING FOR SIGNATURE SPECIFIC PROPOSALS RE MODERNIZATION OF THE YEMENI ARMY.

C. SAUDI ARABIA WILL BE MOVING QUICKLY TO IMPLEMENT VARIOUS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS LIKE ROADS AND THE REFINERY ONCE NECESSARY STUDIES ARE COMPLETED.

2. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION RE THE STATUS OF SOVIET ARMS PROPOSALS, HAMDI SAID THAT HE EXPRESSED TO THE SAUDIS YEMEN'S WILLINGNESS TO BE GUIDED BY SAUDI DESIRES RE MODERNIZATION OF THE YEMENI ARMY AND THAT YEMEN WOULD BE PREPARED TO TURN AWAY FROM THE SOVIETS ONCE THE YEMENI ARMY WAS ASSURED OF A FIRM ALTERNATIVE SUPPLY OF ARMS FROM SAUDI ARABIA AND ITS FRIENDS. HE REITERATED THAT WHILE HE WOULD PREFER A SINGLE SOURCE, THE UNITED STATES, HE AGAIN TOLD THE SAUDIS HE WAS LEAVING IT UP TO THEM TO DECIDE FROM WHOM THE ARMS WOULD BE PURCHASED. HAMDI EMPHASIZED THAT THE IMPORTANT THING NOW IS FOR THE SAUDIS TO DELIVER "THE PROPER" KINDS OF WEAPONS AND TO DELIVER THEM QUICKLY. I ASKED HAMDI IF HE HAD ANY IDEA OF THE SAUDI PROPOSALS. HE SAID THAT THE SAUDIS ONLY SPOKE IN GENERALITIES ABOUT "MODERN" WEAPONS BUT PROMISED HIM DETAILS WHEN THE SPECIAL EMISSARY ARRIVES.

3. I ASKED HAMDI ABOUT SAUDI VIEWS OF THE INTERNAL SITUATION PARTICULARLY WITH REFERENCE TO SHAIKH ABDULLAH AL-AHMAR. HAMDI SAID THAT THE SAUDIS NOW HAVE A BETTER APPRECIATION OF THE LOCAL SITUATION AND OF THE NEED TO SUPPORT A STRONG CENTRAL GOVERNMENT SO THE ONLY WAY SUCCESSFULLY TO DEFEND YEMEN AND BY EXTENSION SAUDI ARABIA AGAINST EXTREMISM AND RADICALISM. HE CONTINUED THAT SHAIKH AHMAR ALSO APPARENTLY UNDERSTANDS THIS AND HAMDI EXPRESSED OPTIMISM THAT HE WOULD NOW BE COOPERATING WITH THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT.

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4. PRESIDENT HAMDI ALSO SEVERAL TIMES EXPRESSED THANKS OF BOTH THE YEMENI GOVERNMENT AND OF HIMSELF FOR ALL THE US EFFORTS ON YEMEN'S BEHALF. IN RESPONSE I TOLD HIM THAT A MAJOR REASON FOR ASS'T. SECRETARY ATHERTON'S RECENT VISIT TO JIDDA HAD BEEN TO PRESENT USG VIEWS RE YEMEN TO SAUDIS AND TO URGE FULL SAUDI SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT HAMDI AND HIS GOVERNMENT. HE

SAID HE WAS "CONSCIOUS" OF THESE AMERICAN EFFORTS IN RIYADH BECAUSE THEY WERE REFLECTED IN THE UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT WHICH THE SAUDIS ARE NOW GIVING TO YEMEN. HE ALSO EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR DIRECT US ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE IN THE PAST AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THIS ASSISTANCE COULD BE EXPANDED IN THE FUTURE.

5. COMMENT: HAMDI APPEARED GENUINELY PLEASED WITH THE RESULTS OF HIS VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA AND EXUDED A QUIET CONFIDENCE ABOUT THE FUTURE BOTH OF HIS REGIME AND OF SAUDI/YEMENI RELATIONS. HIS APPRECIATION FOR OUR EFFORTS ALSO APPEARED GENUINE AND I BELIEVE WE CAN TAKE AMPLE SATISFACTION IN HAVING BROUGHT ABOUT THIS RAPPROACHMENT. END COMMENT.

6. MEANWHILE THERE ARE STILL SEVERAL POINTS WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN CLARIFIED DURING MY TALKS HERE IN SANA. FIRST, WHAT MILITARY ASSISTANCE ARE THE SAUDIS SPECIFICALLY OFFERING? SECOND, HAVE THE SAUDIS ACQUIESCED, AS IT APPEARS THEY HAVE, TO YEMEN'S ACCEPTANCE OF THE SO-CALLED FIRST PHASE OF THE RECENT SOVIET OFFER WHICH ALLEGEDLY INCLUDES MIG 17S AND M-34 TANKS ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE YEMENIS WILL NOT ACCEPT THE SECOND PHASE WHICH INCLUDES "NEW" EQUIPMENT LIKE M-21 AND M-54 TANKS? NEITHER HAMDI NOR ASNAJ WERE CLEAR ON THESE POINTS, ALTHOUGH I PRESSED FOR DETAILS. WILL TRY TO SEE AL-GHASHMI IN NEXT FEW DAYS ON THESE MATTERS. WOULD ALSO RECOMMEND EMBASSY JIDDA ENDEAVORING TO SEEK OUT ANSWERS AT THEIR END.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** FOREIGN RELATIONS, CHIEF OF STATE VISITS, FOREIGN ASSISTANCE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 28 DEC 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ShawDG  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** ShawDG  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 17 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <17 JUN 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <30 OCT 2003 by ShawDG>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PRESIDENT AL-HAMDI ON SAUDI/YEMENI RELATIONS BEGIN SUMMARY: PRESIDENT HAMDI ON DEC 28 EXPRESSED  
**TAGS:** PFOR, YE, SA, (HAMDI, IBRAHIM MUHAMMAD AL)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006